

PUBLiN

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The EU Fifth Framework Programme Project on Innovation in the Public Sector. www.step.no/publin/

Introductory Issue

Welcome to the first issue of the Publin Post, the newsletter for the EU Fifth Framework Programme Project on Innovation in the Public sector. For information on how to be added to or removed from the list, please see the end of this message.

On the Publin research project

So what is it all about?

Publin is to study policy learning and technical and administrative innovation in the public sector, and to get a better understanding of behavioural changes, learning processes and the implementation of new or improved technologies in public organisations.

The study will cover innovation in policy-making organisations, regulatory agencies and public enterprises, and will take into consideration the influence cultural traits, politics, management, networks and co-operation, entrepreneurship and evaluations has on innovation.

Special attention will be given to the policy learning as a policy phenomenon and how it affects innovation, including the effect policy decisions have on innovation in public services.

Publin is a transnational and transdisciplinary adventure, gathering researchers from nine countries and a wide variety of research areas.

We are painfully aware of how difficult such projects can be. Like modern policy development, Publin is in itself a learning process, where people with different backgrounds and different "rationalities" come together in order to develop new views of reality.

Misunderstandings and conflicting views are bound to occur, but then again, that is what learning and research is all about. The discussions at our February workshop in Oslo took place in a friendly and fruitful atmosphere, which bodes well for the future of this project.

The partners agree that local research will be done as two interconnected case studies, one on innovation on the policy level and one on the service level. For practical purposes all case studies will focus on innovation in one of two related policy areas: the health sector and social services.

In parallel with this, there will be a "horizontal" study, discussing public innovation in general and one or two surveys.



The Participants

The following institutions are taking part in the project

- The STEP Centre of Innovation Research, Norway (co-ordinator)
- The University of Haifa
- The University of Maastricht (MERIT)
- The University of Manchester (PREST and CRIC)
- Vinnova, Sweden
- Comenius University of Bratislava
- The University of Alcalá
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- University College Cork
- The Law University of Lithuania

This means that the Publin research team spans the whole of the European area, from Norway in the north to Israel in the south, from Ireland in the west to Slovakia in the east. The group includes EU members, candidate countries and countries that are part of the Framework Programme, but not of the EU.

It has been noted that the group is dominated by small countries. This is good, as far as it makes case studies more comparable, but may pose a problem vis-a-vis the larger European countries. This is why the research team will take care taking research from countries like France and Germany into consideration.

What comes first?

This is a three year long project, which means that the final results cannot be expected until by the end of 2006. However, preliminary versions of some of the reports will be made available this summer.

This applies to:

- A statistical report on the public sector in European Countries
- A paper on the nature of policy learning
- A mapping of competences report -- i.e. a review of the most important research institutions in the area of public innovation
- A literature review of studies of innovation in the public sector
- A note on the differences between public and private sector innovation

As regards the mapping of competences report, we would be grateful for any input from any institutions that believe they should be part of such a directory!

The future of this newsletter

This newsletter will from now on be published four times a year. We may add some special issues, if we have something extra of importance to tell our readers.

We welcome any contributions, being that tips on resources, books, papers, Web sites etc. that should be covered the Publin Post or short news items and articles. Please send your information to per.koch@step.no

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This newsletter is published by STEP (www.step.no), co-ordinator of the PUBLIN research group, which is responsible for The EU Fifth Framework Programme Project on Innovation in the Public Sector. For more information on PUBLIN, see the PUBLIN web site at www.step.no/publin/.

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